Title: Solus Christus (Christ Alone)

Series: Reformation Solas

Scriptures: Exodus 3.1-15; John 14:1-6

The topic is this sermon is salvation **by Christ alone**. The Protestant Reformation Latin slogan “Solus Christus” – **Christ Alone** conveys a **completely exclusive** message about salvation. Solus Christus expresses the complete sufficiency of Christ alone for salvation.

To his disciples in the upper room in Jerusalem, Christ Himself expresses this truth with a declaration of who He is saying: "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”.* In chapter 14 of John’s gospel, Jesus is in the upper room in Jerusalem. The words of Christ recorded in John chapter 14 come after the treachery of Judas and the predicted failure of Peter. It would not be long before he would go to his death at Calvary. Here Jesus comforts his gathered disciples with the promise of a permanent future dwelling place with God.

Jesus clearly states that He is the

**only way to God,**

**the only truth of God and**

**the only life of God**…

Let’s look closely at what He says under three points:

1. Christ alone is the way to God
2. Christ alone is the truth of God
3. Christ alone is the life of God

**1. Christ Alone is the way to God**

If you look on a map of Christchurch and surroundings, you’ll see roads, streets, avenues, paths. These are routes which you can travel to get from one place to another. In the Greek language, there is one word, used many times in the New Testament, which is variously translated: road, street, path or way. Jesus uses this word when he says "*I am the way*”. We know that in the book of Acts, the word ‘way’ is sometimes used (Acts 9:2; 19:9,23; 24:14,22) to identify the Christian faith. The ‘way’ here is the link between God and fallen people estranged from their Creator through sin.

The ‘way’ is like a bridge spanning the chasm between a holy God and naturally unholy people. Between the perfectly clean and the filthy, between the living and the dead. The ‘way’ here is the means of ‘travelling’ from the fallen condition of natural mankind into the perfect presence of God Almighty.

When He says “I am”, Jesus uses two words in the original language which convey the truth that He is divine

God Himself used the Hebrew equivalent of these words when He said to Moses. “*I am who I am*” {Exodus 3.14}

Jesus says "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”.* Notice that people like you and me are **not saved** by a principle, not saved by an idea, not saved by a philosophy, not saved by a force, but saved by a person. A person like none other.

He is both God and Man fully both divine and human. In the Words of the Westminster Confession of Faith (8.4), Jesus has: “*two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood….inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man*”.

A **mediator** is a person who acts as an **intermediary** and who attempts to make people involved in a conflict come to an agreement. We sometimes speak of someone in this mediatorial role as being a “go-between”. We might read a newspaper headline which says: "*the government appointed a mediator to assist in finding a resolution to the dispute*". God has appointed Jesus as the **only mediator** between Himself and mankind, the sole go-between (1 Tim 2.5). This is the essence of what Jesus means when He says “*I am the way*”.

Jesus Christ is the **only way** from God to man – all divine blessings come down from the Father through the Son

Jesus said “*All things have been handed over to me by my Father*” (Matt 11.27a). Jesus Christ is also the only way from man to God. “*In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them*” {2 Cor 5.19}. Christ teaches us the way (Mark 12.14; Luke 20:21). Christ guides us in the way (Luke 1.79)

Christ has opened up for us a new and living way (Heb 10:20). However, it is not that Jesus blazes a trail, a way, which we are then to follow in order to get to God by way of imitating Christ in every action, word and thought.

That would be a salvation of works, not of grace.

It is not only so much that Jesus points us to the way. He Himself IS the way. ‘Way’ here is a noun which describes **who** Jesus is.

About 2,000 years ago Jesus brought comfort to his gathered disciples…..with these words (John 14:1-3):

"*Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also*”

He is the **only way** for his disciples (that wonderfully includes you and me brothers and sisters in Christ) to attain the many dwelling-places which He has prepared in His Father’s house. Not long after saying “I am the Way” – The dead body of Jesus would hang on a cross. At that time, it looked like he was leading the way to death, not to life.

**2. Christ Alone is the truth of God**

At the civil trial of Jesus, Pontius Pilate asked Christ the question “What is truth?”. Do you know the answer? {pause}

The Word ‘truth’ in the Greek language has the meaning ‘without being hidden or concealed’. The Word ‘truth’ conveys the idea of that which seen or expressed as it really is. For example, when you are a witness in a trial, the court attendant says "*Raise your right hand. Do you swear that you will tell the truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?"* And then you say, "*I do*" - and you sit down.

The question the court attendant is asking is "*Are you willing to come into this courtroom and* ***manifest*** *something that is* ***hidden*** *to us that* ***only you know*** *so that you will bear true evidence to that?"* . Therefore when you speak the **truth**, you are manifesting a "**hidden reality**"…a reality which is correctly set forth. **Truth** then is the correspondence between a **reality** and a declaration which professes to set forth or describe the reality.

God is Himself the Great Reality – the God who IS.

He “correctly” sets forth His nature with the Truth of Creation (General Revelation)

He “correctly” sets forth His nature with the Truth of Scripture (Special Revelation).

It is not surprising that rebellious, sinful people **actively suppress** the Truth of Creation (and the glorious Creator) ([Rom 1:18](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Rom%201.18)) and even exchange this clearly manifested (and objective) reality (Creation) for a lie ([Rom 1:25](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Rom%201.25)).

God’s Word, the Bible, conveys truth to mankind. The Old Testament conveys many truths, not fully revealed, but providing shadows and types of who was yet to come (e.g. Col 2.17; Heb 11.39). Think of the manna from heaven; the water from the rock; the brazen serpent; the daily sacrifices. There had been many individuals raised up to be saviors and deliverers (e.g. Moses, Boaz the Kinsman Redeemer, Gideon in Judges).

When Jesus declares "*I am the truth*”. He conveys the truth that **He alone completely reveals** all the truths of general and special revelation which were previously hidden in types and shadows. **He alone is** the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets (Matt 5:17). Jesus alone precisely reveals/narrates God. Gospel writer John puts it this way: (1:18) “*No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side,* ***he has made him known***”. He Himself is the gracious self-disclosure of God Himself (1:14) - “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth*”.

He always said and did exclusively what the Father gave him to say and do - “whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise” (5.19b). Jesus said “I always do the things that are pleasing to him” {8.29b}. **Jesus Christ alone** is the Saviour of the Word(4:42). **Jesus Christ alone** is the Lamb of God (1:29, 34). **Jesus Christ alone** is the One who speaks so that those in the graves hear his voice and come forth (5:28-29). **Jesus Christ alone** is completely reliable and trustworthy in all that he does, says and is. He reveals the whole truth that God has decreed is for mankind to know. He reveals nothing but the truth. His Word is truth. He is truth. Just as God is truth (e.g. Isa 65.16). Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of truth – truth in a person.

Jesus is the dependable source of redemptive revelation – Jesus truly reveals the Father. He expresses this to his disciples in the upper room this way “*If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him*" (John 14.7)

Not long after saying these words, He would appear before Pontius Pilate who would ask that question - “What is truth?” – having listened to the evil lies of false witnesses, this Roman ruler would then proceed to authorize the execution of the world’s only truly innocent man.

**3. Christ Alone is the life of God**

You may know that there are two Greek words for life which are employed in the New Testament: **bios** and **zoe**.

From **bios** we get the English word ‘biography’ the story of a person’s life. In Greek thinking bios was the higher term. Biographies are accounts of significant people who exercised their intellect and will, who directed their energies to moral, intellectual and social ends. From **zoe** we get English word ‘zoology’. Zoe describes the essential essence of life – hence it’s use for both human and animal life. When Jesus says "*I am the life*” he uses Zoe, not Bios. He turns Greek philosophical thinking on its head.

He uses the word ‘Zoe’ when he says to Martha, grieving over the death of Lazarus “*I am the resurrection and the* ***life****. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live*” {John 11.25}. He uses the word ‘Zoe’ when He says of the final judgement to come:“*And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal* ***life***” {Matt 25.46}.

Here is the truth, the essence of death is separation from God; not a lack of bodily existence. That is why we can rejoice in our grief over the death of someone we know who had faith in Jesus Christ. Because though that person may have died, yet they still lives.

Here is the truth, The essence of life is communion with God, not the possession of a bodily existence. Do you know what was the last thing which Jesus did before he left the upper room in Jerusalem before he went out to be met by his betrayer?...He prayed, saying *And this is eternal life(*zwh,*), that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.* (John 17.3).

Jesus has life within Himself (5.26). He is life as opposed to death. He is the light of life (8.12) as opposed to darkness Within a short time after saying these words, the corpse of Jesus would be placed in a tomb. Yet, He did not stay there. Three days later He rose from the dead. The ‘firstfruits’ (1 Cor 15.23) of all who belong to Christ and will be raised up bodily to eternal life in Him when He returns.

Jesus is the true way, the living way, the only way to the God. Jesus alone rightly says “*No one comes to the Father except through me*” {pause}. Thomas à Kempis, was a German who became a priest in the Netherlands in the 14th cent. and authored one of the best known Christian books on devotion: *The Imitation of Christ*, reflected on our text from John 14.6 with these words:

“*Follow thou me. I am the way and the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without life there is no living. I am the way which thou must follow; the truth which thou must believe; the life for which thou must hope. I am the inviolable way; the infallible truth, the never-ending life. I am the straightest way; the sovereign truth; life true, life blessed, life uncreated*”

Jesus is the only way, the true way, the living way to God, so what does that mean for us?

Firstly **Great Comfort** if we know Him as Lord and Saviour. A place in the house of our heavenly Father has already been prepared for us by Christ alone. **When our hearts are troubled** by witnessing the evil other people seek to bring upon the name of Christ and His church we know that Christ is the reigning King and the gates of hell will not prevail against His bride, the church.

**When our hearts are troubled** by our own failures, weaknesses and ongoing un-holiness we know that we are saved, not by our own works, not even by the strength of our faith, but by Christ alone.

There is more. If it is true, and it is, that the only way to be right with God is through Jesus Christ, then all religions apart from Christianity are false. That’s a bold claim in a pluralistic, politically correct, ‘tolerant’ world. It’s a bold claim…It’s a true claim. It’s the claim Jesus makes in our text. If it is true, and it is, that the only way to be right with God is through Jesus Christ, then there is a compelling necessity to proclaim Christ. An urgent need to speak the Word of life to others…to be willing and able to simply, clearly and convincingly convey the truth of the gospel.

Amen.